

Message Text

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45

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01 OMB-01 /086 W

----- 119441

P R 101645Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5627

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PBOR MOPS MO SS SP

SUBJ: SPANISH SAHARA: MORE ON CAPTURE OF MOROCCAN TROOPS

REF: A. FBIS LONDON 091309Z JUNE 75 (NOTAL)

B. RABAT 2733

1. SPANISH EMBASSY HERE HAS PROVIDED MORE BACKGROUND ON CAPTURE OF MOROCCAN TROOPS IN SAHARA REPORTED RES A. AND B. ACCORDING TO SPANISH, INVADERS WERE LARGEY OFFICERS AND NCO'S OF MOROCCAN ARMY MANY OF WHOM APPEARED SPECIALIZED IN COMMUNICATIONS. ONLY ABOUT 16 WERE ORDINARY SOLDIERS WHO COULD HAVE BEEN RECRUITED RECENTLY IN SAHARA FOR GUERRILA SERVICE. THOSE CAPTURED, EMBASSY SAID, WERE ALL IN MOROCCAN ARMY UNIFORM.

2. SPANISH EMBASSY STRESSED THAT INVADERS TOOK NO WAR-
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LIKE STEPS AGAINST 12 DEFENDERS OF MAHBES POST. RATHER,

MOROCCAN COMMANDER OPENED PARLEY WITH POST. SPANISH CALLED FOR REINFORCEMENTS WHICH ARRIVED QUICKLY, PRESUMABLY FROM NEARBY SMARA, AND SURROUNDED INVADERS. SURRENDER WAS PROMPT AND WITHOUT INCIDENT.

3. INCIDENT WILL BE SETTLED QUICKLY AND QUIETLY, SPANISH EMBASSY BELIEVES. SPANISH HAD EXPECTED VIOLENT MEDIA REACTION IN SPAIN TO KING'S ASSERTION THAT THOSE CAPTURED WERE SAHRAOUIS LOYAL TO MOROCCO RATHER THAN MOROCCAN ARMY REGULARS. THIS REACTION WAS NOT FORTHCOMING JUNE 10, AND SPANISH BELIEVE PUBLIC OPINION WILL QUICKLY FORGET INCIDENT. SPANISH ALSO EXPECT THAT INVADERS WILL BE FREED SOON, AND THAT THEIR RELEASE WILL BE HANDLED IN MILITARY, RATHER THAN DIPLOMATIC, CHANNELS. IN THIS CONNECTION, SPANISH SAY THAT KING'S SECURITY CHIEF AND SOUTHERN FORCES COMMANDER, COLONEL DLIMI, WHO NOT IN SOUTH WHEN INCIDENT OCCURED, HAS GONE TO REGION.

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